

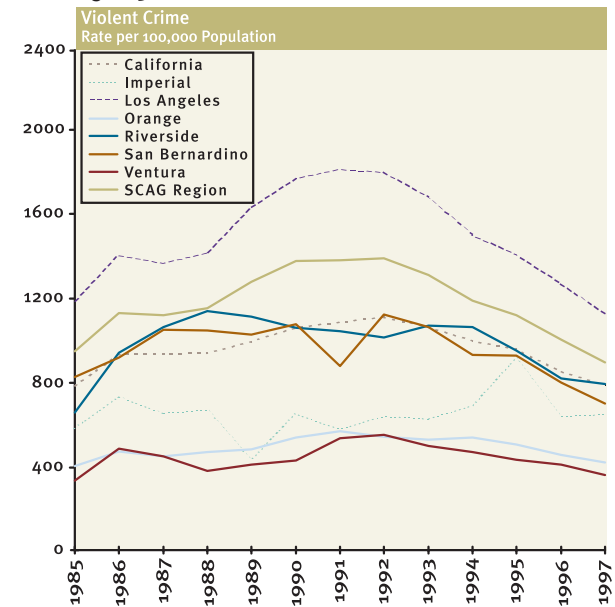
## Quality of Life

### Safety

Serious crime in the nation decreased in 1997 for the sixth consecutive year, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. All individual violent crimes and all property crimes declined in volume and rate from 1996 to 1997. In 1997 the national Crime Index rate per 100,000 population was 3 percent lower than in 1996, and 13 percent lower than in 1988. No single factor accounts for the drop in violent crime, including homicides. Law enforcement experts attribute the decrease to various factors including a stronger economy, stiffer sentencing laws, more police presence in the streets, and a decrease in the number of young adults in the age groups most likely to commit crimes.

***The level of crime is a key indicator of quality of life. In national surveys, safety ranks with good schools among the main considerations in individuals' assessment of the quality of life in their communities.***

Figure 32



California Department of Justice

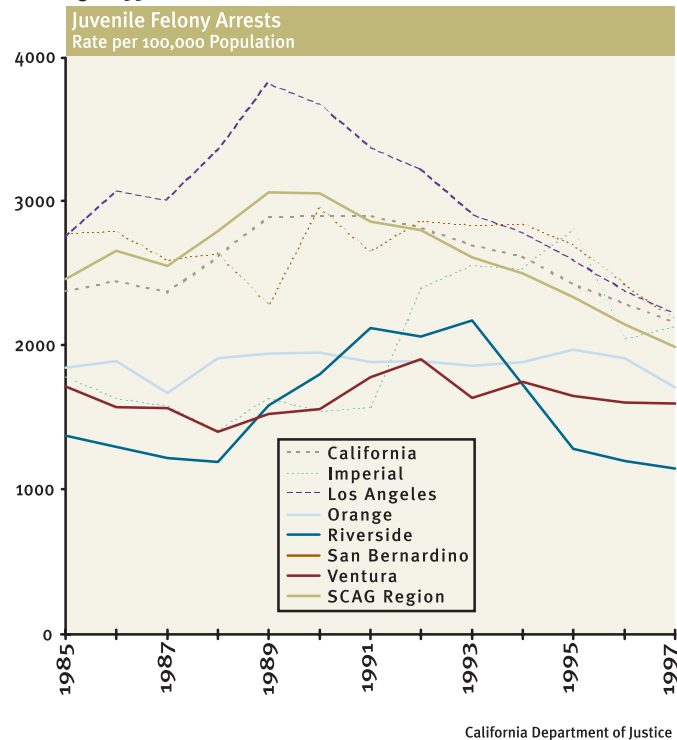
Serious crime in the SCAG region has been declining since 1993, when the rate of violent crimes was 1384 per 100,000 population. That rate was 891 in 1997. The region has experienced a 10 percent reduction in crime per year during the last two years. Every county, except Imperial, experienced a lower crime rate in 1997 than in the previous year. The reduction rates in violent crime ranged from 3 percent in Riverside County to 12.5 percent in Ventura County.

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***Criminal activity by adolescents are indicators of serious problems in a community, particularly where the community is headed. Juveniles involved in crime are more likely to become criminal adults.***

The region registered a reduction in juvenile felony arrests for the eighth consecutive year since 1989. The 1997 rate was 35 percent lower than in 1989. Every county, except Imperial, had a lower rate of juvenile felony arrests in 1997 than in the previous year. The reduction rates ranged from 0.5 percent in Ventura County to 10.7 percent in Orange County. It is important to note that the unemployment rate in Imperial County is consistently much higher than the region's.

Figure 33



## CRIME IN CALIFORNIA

The preliminary 1998 California Department of Justice Crime Index shows that the number of reported offenses in the state during the first six months of 1998 dropped 9.2 percent when compared with the same period in 1997. The offenses covered by the California Crime Index are homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft. There was a decrease in all these categories in the number of offenses reported in the state for the first six months of 1998 compared to the same period in 1997. As shown below, violent crimes decreased by 11.2 percent and property crimes decreased by 8.1 percent.

Table 17

| Crime in California - Percent Change 1997-1998, first six months |       |
|--|-------|
| Violent Crime  | -11.2 |
| Property Crime   | -8.1  |
| Homocide   | -22.2 |
| Rape   | -5.6  |
| Robbery  | -17.5 |
| Aggravated Assault   | -7.9  |
| Burglary   | -6.8  |
| Motor Vehicle Theft  | -9.7  |

Source: California Department of Justice

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### CRIME IN THE NATION

The preliminary 1998 figures released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation indicate a 5 percent decline in serious crime in the United States for the first six months of 1998 compared with the same period in 1997. Law enforcement agencies recorded a 7 percent decline in violent crime and a 5 percent decline in property crime. All regions in the nation registered declines in serious crime: 8 percent in the Northeast, 6 percent in the West, 5 percent in the South, and 1 percent in the Midwest. Violent crime was down 3 percent and property crime 2 percent from 1996. Violent crime includes murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crime includes burglary, larceny/theft, and motor vehicle theft.

In 1997, all regions in the country reported declines in crime from the previous year. The table below shows the decline, per offense, in the crime rate per 100,000 population for the regions in the nation. The crime experienced per 100,000 population ranged from a decline of 5 percent in the Northeast to 2 percent in the Midwest. The 1997 property crime rate dropped 3 percent from 1996. Of all crime reported in 1997, 40 percent was in the South, 24 percent in the West, 22 percent in the Midwest, and 15 percent in the Northeast. The crime index rate per 100,000 population was 5,547 offenses in the South, 5,335 in the West, 4,572 in the Midwest, and 3,734 in the Northeast.

Table 18

| Crime in the Nation - Percent Change 1996-1997 in Rate per 100,000 Population |             |               |                |        |       |         |                    |          |       |                     |
|---|-------------|---------------|----------------|--------|-------|---------|--------------------|----------|-------|---------------------|
|   | Crime Index | Violent Crime | Property Crime | Murder | Rape  | Robbery | Aggravated Assault | Burglary | Theft | Motor Vehicle Theft |
| Nation  | -3.2%       | -4.0%         | -3.1%          | -8.1%  | -1.1% | -7.8%   | -2.3%              | -2.7%    | -3.1% | -3.8%               |
| Northeast   | -5.2%       | -5.3%         | -5.1%          | -11.1% | -1.2% | -11.4%  | -1.0%              | -7.1%    | -3.4% | -10.3%              |
| Midwest   | -2.0%       | -2.0%         | -2.0%          | -4.7%  | -2.8% | -2.8%   | -1.5%              | -1.6%    | -2.2% | -1.6%               |
| South   | -3.2%       | -3.6%         | -3.1%          | -6.7%  | -     | -5.8%   | -2.8%              | -2.4%    | -3.2% | -3.7%               |
| West  | -3.5%       | -5.7%         | -3.2%          | -11.7% | -8.8% | -11.6%  | -3.0%              | -1.7%    | -4.0% | -1.5%               |

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Justice, *Uniform Crime Reports for the United States*, 1997, Table 4. (Final 1997 statistics released November 1998)

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The table below shows the indices for serious crimes in the metropolitan areas in the region, compared to California and the nation. The overall crime indices in the Los Angeles, Orange County, and Ventura County metropolitan areas are lower than the state's and the nation's. The overall crime index for the Riverside/San Bernardino metropolitan area is higher than the state's and the nation's.

According to an annual survey conducted by the Justice Department, which measures crimes reported to the police and those that go unreported, violent crime in America in 1997 fell to its lowest level in at least 24 years. Property crime also dropped to its lowest level since 1973, when the government began conducting annual household surveys of crime victimization. The survey, however, found that only 37 percent of all crimes were reported to the police.

*(Please see Safety under Metropolitan Regions for crime by metropolitan region.)*

Table 19

| 1997 Crime Index per 100,000 Population |             |               |                |        |      |         |         |          |       |                     |
|---|-------------|---------------|----------------|--------|------|---------|---------|----------|-------|---------------------|
|   | Crime Index | Violent Crime | Property Crime | Murder | Rape | Robbery | Assault | Burglary | Theft | Motor Vehicle Theft |
| Nation                                  | 4923        | 611           | 4312           | 7      | 36   | 186     | 382     | 920      | 2887  | 506                 |
| California                              | 4865        | 798           | 4067           | 8      | 32   | 253     | 506     | 927      | 2431  | 709                 |
| Los Angeles                             | 4745        | 1136          | 3609           | 13     | 30   | 411     | 682     | 815      | 1945  | 849                 |
| Orange California                       | 3543        | 429           | 3114           | 4      | 21   | 142     | 262     | 670      | 1953  | 490                 |
| Riverside/<br>San Bernardino            | 5194        | 757           | 4437           | 9      | 34   | 214     | 501     | 1320     | 2338  | 779                 |
| Ventura                                 | 3054        | 358           | 2696           | 4      | 25   | 120     | 210     | 648      | 1755  | 293                 |

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Justice, *Uniform Crime Reports for the United States*, 1997, Tables, 4, 5, and 6.